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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application
Helen Vivian Hsieh et al.
Application No. 10/776,643
Filed: February 12, 2004
Attorney Docket No. P-5430-P1

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: DECISION ON APPLICATION
: FOR PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT
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This is in response to the PETITION FOR PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.705 filed February 16, 2010. Applicant requests that the determination of patent term adjustment be corrected from 353 to 1433 days. Applicant requests this correction in part on the basis that the Office will take in excess of three years to issue this patent and is considered in light of the recent court decision in light of the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit's decision in Wyeth v. Kappos, 2009-1120 (Fed. Cir. 1-7-2010).

As the instant application for patent term adjustment requests reconsideration of the patent term adjustment as it relates to the Office's failure to issue the patent within three years of the filing date, the application for patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.705(b) is **DISMISSED as PREMATURE**.

Knowledge of the actual date the patent issues is required to calculate the amount, if any, of additional patent term patentees are entitled to for Office failure to issue the patent within three years. See 37 CFR 1.702(b). (This is true even where a request for continued examination (RCE) was filed). The computer will not undertake the § 1.702(b) calculation until the actual date of issuance of the patent has been determined. Likewise, the computer will not calculate any further Office delay under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(4) or applicant delay under 37 CFR 1.704(c)(10) until the actual date of issuance of the patent has been determined. As such, the Office cannot make a determination on the patent term adjustment relating to those provisions until the patent has issued.

Requesting reconsideration of the patent term adjustment to be indicated on the patent under 37 CFR 1.705(b) based on the initial determination of patent term adjustment and a projected issuance date of the patent (or even the filing date of the request for

continued examination) is premature. Accordingly, it is appropriate to dismiss such a request as premature.

Rather than file an application for patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.705(b) contesting the 37 CFR 1.702(b) calculation at the time of the mailing of the notice of allowance, applicants are advised that they may wait until the time of the issuance of the patent and file a request for reconsideration of the patent term adjustment pursuant to 37 CFR 1.705(d). As the USPTO does not calculate the amount of time earned pursuant to 37 CFR 1.702(b) until the time of the issuance of the patent, the Office will consider any request for reconsideration of the patent term adjustment due to an error in the calculation of 37 CFR 1.702(b) to be timely if the request for reconsideration is filed within two months of the issuance of the patent. However, as to all other bases for contesting the initial determination of patent term adjustment received with the notice of allowance, applicants must timely file an application for patent term adjustment prior to the payment of the issue fee.¹

To the extent that applicant otherwise requests correction of the patent term adjustment at the time of the mailing of the Notice of Allowance, the application for patent term adjustment is **DISMISSED**.

Applicants argue that the period of 290 days Applicant delay is incorrect based on the following: the reduction of 44 days of applicant delay should instead be 75 days for the period of delay from July 10, 2004 to September 23, 2004 for the response filed to the Notice to File Missing Parts mailed May 10, 2004. Also, the reduction of 246 days should instead be 29 days for the period from February 4, 2007 to March 4, 2007 for the response filed to the Restriction Requirement mailed January 4, 2007.

Applicant's arguments have been considered, but not found to be persuasive.

Rule 1.704(b) sets forth, in pertinent part:

an applicant shall be deemed to have failed to engage in reasonable efforts to conclude processing or examination of an application for the cumulative total of any periods of time in excess of three months that are taken to reply to any notice or action by the Office making any rejection, objection, argument, or other request, measuring such three-month period

¹ For example, if applicants dispute both the calculation of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1) for Office failure to mail a first Office action or notice of allowance not later than fourteen months after the date on which the application was filed, and under 37 CFR 1.702(b) for Office failure to issue a patent within three years of the actual filing date of the application, then applicants must still timely file an application for patent term adjustment prior to the payment of the issue fee to contest the calculation of Office delay in issuing a first Office action or notice of allowance. See 37 CFR 1.705(b) and 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(3)(B). A dispute as to the calculation of the § 1.702(a)(1) period raised on request for reconsideration of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.705(d) will be dismissed as untimely filed.

from the date the notice or action was mailed or given to the applicant, in which case the period of adjustment set forth in § 1.703 shall be reduced by the number of days, if any, beginning on the day after the date that is three months after the date of mailing or transmission of the Office communication notifying the applicant of the rejection, objection, argument, or other request and ending on the date the reply was filed. The period, or shortened statutory period, for reply that is set in the Office action or notice has no effect on the three-month period set forth in this paragraph.

Based upon 37 CFR 1.704(b), applicant delay in the amount of 44 days is correct for the response to the Notice to File Missing Parts filed September 23, 2004.

However, pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.704(c), circumstances that constitute a failure of the applicant to engage in reasonable efforts to conclude processing or examination of an application also include the following circumstances, which will result in the following reduction of the period of adjustment set forth in § 1.703 to the extent that the periods are not overlapping:

(7) Submission of a reply having an omission (§1.135(c)), in which case the period of adjustment set forth in § 1.703 shall be reduced by the number of days, if any, beginning on the day after the date the reply having an omission was filed and ending on the date that the reply or other paper correcting the omission was filed;

It is undisputed that a reply was filed on March 5, 2007 to the January 4, 2007 Office Action, however, that reply had an omission and that omission was not vacated, thus a reply was still required. The omission was corrected on November 6, 2007, 88 days after the mailing of the Notice on May 10, 2007. Therefore a period of 88 days delay should have been accorded.

In view thereof, the correct determination of patent term adjustment for at the time of the mailing of the notice of allowance should be five hundred eleven (643 days attributable to examination delay minus 44 + 88 days applicant delay) days.

The Office acknowledges submission of the \$200.00 fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.18(e) for consideration of the application for patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.705(b).

Any request for reconsideration of the patent term adjustment indicated on the patent must be timely filed within two months after issuance pursuant to 37 CFR 1.705(d) and must include payment of the required fee under 37 CFR 1.18(e).

The Office of Data Management has been advised of this decision. This application is being referred to the Office of Data Management for issuance of the patent.

Telephone inquiries specific to this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3212.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia Faison-Ball". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P".

Patricia Faison-Ball
Senior Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions